





**LITTLE LUCIA'S
ISLAND CAMP**

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

LITTLE LUCIA

The first of the *Little Lucia* stories.

"Written for children, but older folk will find real joy, and have a better view of life after reading it."—*The News* (Denver).

LITTLE LUCIA AND HER PUPPY

"Anyone who ever had a beloved and troublesome puppy will treasure it."—*The Woman Citizen*.

DR. TAM O'SHANTER

"Soundly doggy, a worthy addition to the select company of animals in fiction."—*The Literary Review*.

E. P. DUTTON & COMPANY



Even Laddie picked up a strawberry box in his mouth.
(Chapter VIII)

LITTLE LUCIA'S ISLAND CAMP

BY

MABEL L. ROBINSON

AUTHOR OF "LITTLE LUCIA," "LITTLE LUCIA AND
HER PUPPY," ETC.



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TO
THE REAL BROTHER
JAMES



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LITTLE LUCIA'S ISLAND CAMP

CHAPTER I

LADDIE GOES INTO TRAINING

LITTLE LUCIA thought it might be better if they went in the automobile on their camping trip.

"My Laddie would behave better on the land," she explained. "He isn't a water dog."

"Well," said Brother James, "of course we could leave Laddie at home with Cook. She would take very good care of him."

Little Lucia didn't say a word. She knew that James wouldn't go camping without Laddie.

"I'll tell you what we will do," said

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Mother. "Before Daddy gets here we will try to get Laddie used to the boat and then maybe he will behave. But Daddy would be dreadfully disappointed if we didn't go on his new motor boat."

"Oh," said little Lucia. "Well, we mustn't disappoint Daddy."

So James and little Lucia took Laddie down to the shore to get him used to the boat.

"He was very young last summer," said little Lucia, "so he can't remember about the ocean at all."

Sure enough, the first thing Laddie did was to take a drink of it. He was very thirsty after his run from the house and he swallowed a large gulp. Pschew! He sneezed and he coughed and he shook his head. Then he looked at James and little Lucia.

“He looks very mad,” said little Lucia.

“He thinks we put the salt in.”

“Come on,” said Brother James. “First we will get in the rowboat near shore.”

Little Lucia waded out and climbed in, and Brother James waded out and climbed in. But Laddie sat on the shore. He wasn't going wading in anything that tasted as bad as that salt water. Besides, the boat rolled every which way and he liked steady things to climb into. So he sat still, and when James called him, he yapped, “Ow! ow!”

“Now you see,” said Brother James. “He'll have to stay at home with Cook when we go camping.”

Little Lucia didn't say a word. She swung her bare toes in the water and her big brown eyes looked quite sad. So Brother James stopped teasing at once.

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"Hop out, little Lucia," he said, "and help me pull the boat up on the shore."

They pulled and tugged until the boat was quite firm on the beach. Laddie watched them, but he didn't try to help them the way he usually did.

"Now we'll just sit in it," said James, "and when Laddie sees how steady it is, he will come too."

Sure enough, in a few minutes along came Laddie to the edge of the boat.

"Want to come in?" asked little Lucia.

"Wow!" said Laddie, and he gave a big jump into the boat.

Then he sniffed all around in it and peeked over the edge to see if the land was still there. Finally, he lay down on the bottom with his soft head on little Lucia's bare feet.

"Now you wait," whispered James.

"The tide is coming in and in a few minutes we'll be afloat. Then he'll have a boat ride without knowing it."

"Oh! oh! oh! Brother James!" cried little Lucia, "how did you ever think of that?"

"That was easy," said Brother James in his big thirteen-year-old voice. "You have to coax a collie, you know."

In a few minutes, swish, swash, the tide began to lap along the bottom of the boat. Laddie stuck up both ears and looked at little Lucia. She smothered his nose.

Swish, swash, the boat swayed under him. Laddie stood up and peeked over the edge. Water all around him. He didn't wait a minute. Splash, smash, he was on shore, running up and down to dry his coat.

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“Row! row! row!” he barked. “Come on ashore quick!”

But the children never moved. James began to paddle slowly up and down the shore. Laddie felt very lonesome.

“Ee! ee! ee!” he cried, and waded into the water a few inches.

James pushed the bow of the boat on the shore again and in bounced Laddie. It was no fun on the shore all alone.

Pretty soon the tide went swish, swash against the boat again and off it floated.

Laddie peeked out. “Ee! ee!” he whimpered, but he didn't jump out.

“Oh, what a good dog!” said little Lucia.

“Oh, what a smart dog!” said Brother James.

Laddie wagged his tail, but only a little so the boat wouldn't rock. They all

LADDIE GOES INTO TRAINING 7

kept very still. By and by Laddie sat down. But he kept his eye on the water. Then James picked up his oars and began to row gently. Laddie looked at little Lucia and then at the water. He stood up.

“Such a good dog!” said little Lucia in her softest, most comforting voice.

“Such a brave dog!” said James, rowing a little more gently.

Laddie sat down again.

After a few minutes James pushed the bow of the boat up on the shore. They all jumped out and Laddie raced up and down the beach.

“Rah! rah! rah!” he barked.

“We’ll make a sea dog of him yet,” said Brother James, tying up the boat.

The next day Laddie waited only a few minutes before he got into the boat, and James rowed up and down for a

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longer time. He made Laddie sit still in the bottom of the boat, but anyway Laddie was too anxious to want to move.

Before Daddy arrived on his vacation, Laddie would run down to the shore ahead of the children and jump in the boat. And he didn't mind where they rowed him. He liked walking about on the motor boat out at its mooring, too, because he had plenty of room and it didn't sway around so much as the row-boat.

"I hope he will like the motor boat just as much when the engine makes it go," said little Lucia.

"Well, I don't know," said Brother James. "A motor boat chugging isn't much like a motor boat tied to its mooring. But we'll have to wait until Daddy comes before we can train him any more."

CHAPTER II

THE START

AFTER all, there was no time to train Laddie any more. Daddy arrived in his car one afternoon, all loaded with tents and camp dishes and a camp stove and folding beds and folding chairs—the car was so full that you could just see Daddy squeezed in at the wheel.

“No sir!” said Daddy. “We can’t stay around one minute to train dogs. Off we go tomorrow morning. My vacation has begun!”

“Well, anyway,” said little Lucia to James, “we have trained Laddie so well that he will be all right. I guess Daddy will be surprised.”

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The next morning such a hurrying and scurrying! They all rose very early. Little Lucia and James had been awake in their hammock beds out under the trees since the first Peabody bird whistled. And Laddie, who slept on a rug under little Lucia's hammock, was prancing around as soon as it was daylight. They were all three very much excited because they had never been on a camping trip before. Of course, Laddie didn't know where he was going, but he was sure he was going somewhere, and that was enough to make him excited any time. Nutty the Squirrel nearly whisked his tail off and cracked his alarm clock at Laddie's actions before he went in the house for breakfast.

When Mother saw all the things that

Daddy had bought for the trip, she said they would have to hire the little steamer to go along behind with the load. But Daddy said everything folded up and he knew just where to pack everything in the boat.

Back and forth with its loads went the rowboat from the shore to the motor boat, and each time Laddie wanted to hop aboard because he was afraid they might forget to take him.

At last all the canvas beds and chairs and table and buckets and tents were folded up and stowed away in the boat; and all the funny pots and kettles and pans that little Lucia liked so much because the little ones all fitted into the big ones, were packed in the cabin; and all the shiny tin cans and fat bags of food

were shut into the cabin cupboards; and nothing was left to go aboard but the passengers.

"Are you sure," asked Daddy, looking at Laddie, who was racing up and down the beach like a crazy dog, "are you sure that he won't tip us all over?"

"Oh, yes, Daddy!" said little Lucia. "He sits so still! You just wait and see." She felt very anxious. Suppose Daddy should think that Laddie ought to stay at home with Cook!

But Laddie climbed into the rowboat and sat down in the middle of it very still and he never moved all the way out to the motor boat. Then James gave his hind legs a boost and here he was in the motor boat, ready to start. Daddy was quite pleased. And little Lucia and James felt extremely proud.



“Are you sure,” asked Daddy, looking at Laddie . . .
“are you sure that he won’t tip us all over?”

Everybody found a comfortable seat, Laddie stretched out on the floor, and Daddy got ready to start the engine. Now Laddie didn't know that a motor boat made any more noise than a rowboat. When the red wheel suddenly rolled over and gave a loud snort, Laddie leaped to his feet.

"Chug! chug!" puffed the engine.

"Ug! ug!" barked Laddie.

The engine went faster and louder. Laddie jumped up on the deck. They roared at each other. James grabbed Laddie's collar. Laddie pulled back his head to make more noise. James missed the collar, and flop! over went Laddie backwards into the water.

"Oh! oh! oh!" screamed little Lucia, "my Laddie will be drowned! Oh, save him, Daddy! Save him!"

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She leaned so far over the edge that mother had to seize her and pull her back. Laddie, looking very much surprised, was swimming along behind.

Daddy stopped the engine at once, and pretty soon Laddie caught up to them. Then James and Dad leaned over and pulled, first his front legs and then his hind legs.

Little Lucia watched with anxious eyes.

"Oh, my poor Laddie! He'll come in two!" she cried.

"Well, he's pretty heavy," gasped James, giving him a final boost.

In came Laddie! Pschew! His mouth was full of salt water because he had had it open, barking. He sneezed and he coughed. Then he discovered that he was very wet. He gave himself an enormous shake, then another, then another. By

the third shake everything on the boat was wet except the food in the cupboard.

The family all wiped off their faces with towels and sat down in the sun to dry.

“Now,” said Daddy, “if he does that again, back he goes to Cook!”

But Laddie hadn't liked being ducked any more than the rest of them, and he was pretty careful when the boat started up again. He barked at the engine and the engine snorted at him, but he kept his four feet on the floor.

“Too much noise,” said Daddy.

“Row, row! row!” shouted Laddie. He had had so much excitement that morning that he just couldn't stop.

“I'll fix him,” said James. He saw little Lucia's big brown eyes looking more and more anxious.

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He filled the bailing can with water and held it over Laddie's head. Laddie looked up at it.

"Ow! ow!" he said. Then more softly, "Ow! ow!" then, "Ee! ee!" then he stopped.

"All right!" James made his voice sound very severe. "Now you go over there and lie down by little Lucia and get dry. And don't let me hear a whimper from you again!"

Then he turned his back and grinned. Laddie minded, looking very meek. Then everybody turned his back and grinned.

"Chug! chug! Put! put!" went the motor boat all by itself. And they were really off on their trip.

CHAPTER. III

MOON ISLAND, AHOY!

AS soon as everything had quieted down and the boat was running smoothly, Daddy got out his big charts which had pictures of the islands and the bays. He and James spread them out in order to plan where they would camp that night.

“Moon Island looks like a good place,” said James, putting his finger on the map of a small round island. “It has a deep cove for a landing place.”

“All right,” said Dad, “and we ought to get there by lunch time.”

“I’m hungry already,” declared little Lucia.

"Already!" cried Brother James, "Why, you just ate your breakfast!"

"I thought you might be," said Mother. She went into the cabin and came back with a box of sandwiches and a thermos bottle of milk.

James looked at the thin sandwiches with peanut butter sticking out at the edges.

"Hum!" he said. "Quite a lot of sandwiches for anybody no bigger than little Lucia!"

"I might give one to Laddie," said little Lucia. "He gets hungry very quickly just like me."

"Hum!" said Brother James. "It does seem quite a while ago since I ate breakfast. I got up rather early."

Little Lucia looked at Mother and their eyes twinkled at each other. She took out

two thin sandwiches for herself and carried the box over to James.

“Perhaps you’d better not eat them all,” she said, “I still feel pretty hungry.”

Then she went back to her seat beside Mother, who was steering, and reached out for her sandwich. It wasn’t there. She looked under her cushion and around the steering wheel. The sandwiches were gone.

“Why, Mother,” cried little Lucia, “a fish must have eaten my sandwiches!”

Just at that minute her eye fell on Laddie. He was looking out to sea, as if at something very interesting. But little Lucia noticed that his red tongue gave his chops a quick lick.

“Open your mouth, Laddie!” she said, but Laddie shut his teeth together.

“Never mind, you needn’t. I see

crumbs on your mouth. You are a naughty dog!"

Laddie winked hard and looked every which way.

They all turned their backs and grinned. Then little Lucia went back to the box beside James. She looked into it.

"Just two left in the bottom, Mother," she said. Daddy and James looked every which way and winked hard. "Seems to me I wasn't the only hungry one." She took one sandwich back to Mother and ate one herself. Then she drank her milk and felt a great deal better.

Laddie was all ready to land by this time. He had never stayed so long on board before. Every time the boat chugged by a small island he would walk up and down and lean his head way over the edge and say, "Ee! ee! ee!!" Little

Lucia had to hunt his ball up and let him chew a hunk out of it to amuse him.

At last Dad pointed out Moon Island.

“Moon Island, ahoy!” said Brother James. “Get ready to land.”

“Why, I thought it would be just big enough to step on,” said little Lucia. “It looks so tiny on the map.”

Brother James laughed his big thirteen-year-old laugh.

“You could walk all day,” he said, “and you would still be on Moon Island.”

When they came to the deep cove, Mother steered very carefully around the opening to it. The motor boat said, “Put! tut! tut!” and the high rocks on each side made the echo say, “Tut! tut!” Laddie heard the new noise of the echo, and he barked “Row! row!” “Ow! ow!” barked the echo.

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Laddie began to get excited. The chug of the boat and its echo, and Laddie's bark and its echo, made a dreadful racket. It came from all sides at once until Laddie was sure that dozens of dogs were on shore waiting for him. He couldn't stop for the rowboat to take him in. As soon as he saw the sandy beach near, he leaped into the water and swam ashore.

"Rah! rah! rah!" he barked, racing up and down the beach. But on shore there was no echo, and not one of his dozen barking dogs could he find. So he ran up to the spring and took a long drink of water. Sailing in a motor boat was thirsty work!

The first thing everybody had to do was to pick up driftwood for a fire. They all scurried back and forth, for the salt air had made them hungry. Those peanut

butter sandwiches seemed almost as far away as breakfast.

As soon as Laddie saw them all hurrying and picking up sticks, he began to hurry and pick up sticks, too. But he threw them up in the air and chased them, so he wasn't much help.

Before long the driftwood fire was blazing and Dad had settled his camp stove over it. Nobody could wait for potatoes to roast, but Dad knew a way to fry them crisp and brown very quickly. Mother popped the steak on a broiler, and then the good smells that came from that camp-fire! Laddie sat beside it, his mouth watering so hard that his pink tongue dripped.

Little Lucia and James spread a cloth on a big flat rock and unfolded all the dishes which were fitted into one another.

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Each person had a shiny plate and cup and saucer. On each shiny plate Mother heaped hot steak and crisp potatoes and in each shiny cup Dad poured fragrant coffee. Dad had two cupfuls, and Mother had one cupful, and James had half a cupful, and little Lucia had three drops in her hot milk.

Laddie drank spring water. But how he did chew his steak bone! He crunched away at it with his strong white teeth as if he had forgotten too that he had ever helped himself to any peanut butter sandwiches. He even sat up on his hind legs to beg for a thin raisin cooky for dessert.

But as he had only lately learned to sit up, he wasn't very steady and he tipped over, flop! against the coffee pot. Daddy's third cup of coffee flowed out in the sand, and Laddie looked quite discouraged when

he heard what Dad said, and noticed how hot the coffee felt on his paws. Little Lucia hurried to give him a cooky for fear he would never sit up again.

When dinner was over, little Lucia suddenly felt very sleepy. Dad stretched the steamer rug out in the sand where the green sea grass and the beach peas shaded her face. Little Lucia watched the purple blossoms nod their heads up and down, back and forth, up and down, back and—why, she was sound asleep!

CHAPTER IV

PEEK! PEEK! PEEK!

WHEN little Lucia woke from her nap, she lay very still for a few moments looking up into the green sea grass and the beach pea blossoms. The air smelled salty from the ocean and sweet from the clovers. The sun felt warm on her hands. She stretched.

“I must get right up,” thought little Lucia, “and help put my tent up.”

She lifted her brown head when suddenly she noticed a bright eye looking at her through the sea grasses. Very slowly and softly she sat up. Still the bright eye watched unwinking.

“Oh! oh! oh!” said little Lucia to her-

self, "it's a bird on her nest! Now I mustn't scare her away."

She tried as hard as she could to creep away quietly, but suddenly the bird shot past her to the beach crying, "Peek! peek! peek!"

Little Lucia laughed. "She says for me to peek so I guess I will." She moved carefully around in the sea grass.

"Peek! peek! peek!" cried the mother bird, flying back.

Little Lucia stood still. "That's all I'm going to do," she told her. "Don't you be scared."

Then right at her feet she saw four spotted eggs in a loose grass nest under the beach pea blossoms.

"Oh! oh!" cried little Lucia. "I found a nest all by myself. Won't Brother James be surprised!" She picked up her

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rug. "Now I'll go away," she told the mother bird who was running up and down on the sand. "You look very nervous, teetering up and down like that."

When little Lucia got back to the camp, she was so surprised at what she saw that she almost forgot about the nest. While she had slept, Dad and James had been hard at work.

Just out of reach of the tide, side by side, stood two brown khaki tents. Through the open flaps little Lucia could see Mother making up the cot beds. She ran into the smaller tent. Here was a little bed for her on one side and a larger one for James on the other side. Beside her bed was a small canvas chair and beside James's bed was a middle-sized canvas chair.

"I feel just like Golden Hair in the

bears' house," she cried, as she sat down on the little chair, and then on the middle-sized chair. "Now I must try the big bear's chair," and she ran into Daddy's tent.

"Bow! wow! wow!" Laddie bounced out at her from under the bed, and little Lucia was thinking so hard about bears that for a minute she thought one had her.

"Oo— oo— oo!" she screamed and leaped square into the middle of the cot.

"Row! row! row!" shouted Laddie, who thought this was great fun, leaping after her.

Now a canvas cot has to be unfolded just right and all its legs set up carefully and James had not finished setting up its fourth leg. So when little Lucia and Laddie leaped on it, it folded up. Down they went under the pillows and bed-

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clothes. By this time little Lucia was sure that a bear had got her.

"Oo-oo— oo—*oooh!*" she screamed.
"Daddy, save me! James! Mother!"

James was laughing too hard to help, but Mother came running from the other tent. She fished little Lucia out of the folded up cot and pulled the blankets off Laddie, whose "Row! row! row!" was beginning to sound quite smothered.

"Now you two run down on the beach," said Mother in her nice soothing voice. "You don't seem to be much help around here."

Little Lucia looked at Laddie and he looked at her.

"I thought you were a bear," said little Lucia, her eyes as big as saucers.

"Ook! ook! ook!" grunted Laddie, his tongue hanging out. "Most got choked."

It wasn't until they were sitting around the camp-fire eating supper that little Lucia remembered to tell them about her bird's nest.

"The mother bird rocked up and down like a rocking-horse, she was so excited," said little Lucia, trying to toast a bit of bread on the end of a stick. "Why, there she is now, running behind those rocks. Hear her say, 'Peek! peek! peek!'"

"It's a sandpiper," said Brother James. "Their nests are easy to find."

"All right," said little Lucia, eating her toast. "You find hers tomorrow morning."

"That's easy," said Brother James. "I can find it in two minutes."

Little Lucia didn't say a word. She just nibbled her toast.

That night she was hardly in her small

cot bed before she was asleep. She wanted to stay awake to listen to the swish, swash of the waves on the beach and to watch the stars wink through the flap of the tent, but the sun and wind on the water and the salt air blowing through the tent made her eyelashes feel so heavy that she couldn't keep her eyes open.

Soon the beach was all quiet and dark except for the swish, swash of the waves and the glow of coals in the camp-fire.

CHAPTER V

A SANDPIPER PARADE

THE next morning when little Lucia woke, she could hear the crackle of the breakfast fire on the beach. Then she got a whiff of the bacon cooking over it. She ran to the door of her tent. The sun made the water look like shining blue glass. And there swimming across the little cove, his head smooth and wet like a seal's, was Brother James. Laddie was racing up and down the beach barking, "Out! out! out! Come out!"

Little Lucia slid into her speck of a bathing suit and ran down to the edge of the water. The day was so bright that it

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made her dance on her toes and wave her arms in the sun.

Spang! she jumped into the water. And spang! she jumped out of it. Oooh, it was cold! She scampered twice as hard back to her tent. Laddie barked "Ha! ha! ha!" He knew better than to go into that cold water.

Little Lucia's dip had made her so hungry that she hurried like a white-head. That's what James said when he hurried very fast. She tingled all over with a warm glow. When she ran up to Mother for her morning kiss, she was as pink as the wild roses along the shore.

Mother cooked one pan of bacon, and Daddy cooked another, and still there wasn't enough. As for eggs, the shells made a high pile on the beach. And they

finished a box of fresh honey. Mother shook her head.

“Today we must fish and dig clams,” she said, “or we shall have to sail home because we have no more food. We ate two breakfasts this morning.”

Little Lucia looked alarmed.

“I’ll dig clams,” she said.

Brother James got up quickly.

“I’ll go fishing this minute,” he said.

Dad laughed.

“All right,” he said. “But first, everyone must help clear up. This is Mother’s vacation, too.”

Then everyone flew around so fast that in half an hour the camp was spick and span.

“Now,” said little Lucia, “where’s the nest, Brother James?”

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For the life of him, Brother James couldn't remember where little Lucia had taken her nap yesterday. And little Lucia wouldn't even glance toward the place. He walked slowly along the beach in exactly the wrong direction. He poked in the sweet fern and peered under the stones. Little Lucia didn't say a word for a long time.

Then she fastened Laddie to the tent post.

"You stay here," she said. "You'd scare my little piper most to death."

"No! no! no!" barked Laddie.

"Yes! yes! yes!" cried little Lucia, and she ran up to the place where the sand-piper had her nest. In a minute she found it. But what had happened? She blinked her eyes and looked again. Then she dropped down on her knees beside it.

“Oh, James! James! James!” she called. “Come quick!”

James came running across the beach and little Lucia was so excited that she forgot to remind him that he hadn’t found the nest.

“Oh, look!” she cried. “The baby pipers are out! And they are all covered with fur!”

“That’s soft down like chickens,” said Brother James. “And see how they all sit with their beaks together in the middle of the nest. Oh, quick, little Lucia, here comes the mother!” and he pulled little Lucia back into the sweet smelling bayberry bushes.

They crept away softly.

“Could we come back again this afternoon?” asked little Lucia.

“Perhaps we might, but you must be

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very careful not to disturb the mother," said Brother James in his big thirteen-year-old voice.

"All right," said little Lucia. "But who found the nest, I wonder?"

Brother James picked up some flat pebbles.

"I might show you how to skip stones," he remarked, making one skip seven times.

Late in the afternoon after the fish had been caught, little Lucia and James took Mother and Daddy up to see the sand-piper's nest. Laddie stayed tied to the tent post.

Little Lucia bent over the nest. Then she straightened up and looked at Mother, her eyes as big as saucers.

"It's empty!" she cried. "Oh, Mother,



Mary Sherwood Wright

"She's taking her brand new babies out for a walk."

do you suppose Laddie has eaten them up?"

"No, indeed," said Mother in her nice soothing voice. "Dogs don't eat birds."

Just then James called softly, "Come over here."

They crept over to the knoll where he stood. He pointed to the beach. There, walking along, teeter, teeter, was mother sandpiper; and there scrambling and tipping along behind her, teeter, teeter, were four scraps of baby sandpipers.

"Why, Mother!" gasped little Lucia in a whisper. "She's taking her brand new babies out for a walk!"

But Mother Sandpiper heard the whisper.

"Peek!" she said sharply. Instantly, the beach was empty. Not a baby could be seen. The mother was flying out over

the water. James moved slowly among the stones. Then he turned and beckoned to them.

"Go very carefully," he warned. "You might step on one."

Little Lucia hardly dared put one foot in front of the other, but at last she reached Brother James. He pointed to a crack in the rock. There, squeezed in tight, perfectly still, was one baby. He pointed under a stone. There, pushed in as far as it could get, perfectly still, was another baby. You never could have told either of them from the stones. The other two were nowhere to be seen.

"Let's sit down behind the bayberry bushes a minute," said Dad.

They sat down and waited. Soon, "Peek! peek!" came the cry across the water, then nearer, and then when she had

reached the spot where she had left them, the mother sandpiper gave the loveliest call, soft, gentle, quivery. At once out ran four little sandpipers, and teeter, teeter, they started off down the beach again.

Little Lucia squeezed Mother's hand. "Did you hear her lovely mother-call?" she asked. And Mother squeezed little Lucia's hand.

Then little Lucia laughed.

"They looked as if they had on little 'possum fur coats like yours, Mother," she said.

"Pretty smart little pipers," said Brother James. "All dressed up and out for a parade the day they were born!"

CHAPTER VI

LITTLE LUCIA DIGS CLAMS

WELL," said Daddy the next afternoon, "I should like a good clam chowder for my supper."

"Oh, yes," said little Lucia, nodding her brown head. "I was going to dig you some clams yesterday but I was too busy."

"I think I could eat about a bushel," said Daddy, "so perhaps I'd better go along and help."

"Perhaps you had," agreed little Lucia, "and James and Mother, too. A bushel is a lot."

The tide was going out slowly, slowly, leaving the brown mud flats bare, and un-

covering the shining green eel grass. It looked nice and squashy to wade in.

“Put on your old sneakers,” warned Brother James, “or the shells may cut your feet.”

Down on the beach they all went, out, out, where the clean smooth pebbles left off and the mud began.

“Oh, what makes that funny round hole!” cried little Lucia, stooping over to look. Squirt! a little stream of salt water hit her square in the eye.

“Oo— oo— oo— Mother, it spit at me!” cried little Lucia, running with one eye shut to have Mother dry her face. “It spit at me! What is it?”

Mother laughed.

“That’s a clam telling you that it is at home,” she said. “Now you know where to dig. See here.” She stamped her foot

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and all around out of the mud shot little fountains of salt water. "This is a good place to begin."

Daddy started a hole for little Lucia with his clam hook and then she took her trowel and dug down and around in the soft mud.

"Oh! oh! I've got one!" she cried, pulling out a big white clam. "Oh! oh! another! and another! See Mother, tucked in on mud shelves all around!"

Laddie, who was paddling around wondering what everybody was so excited about, ran to little Lucia's hole. He jumped back when a clam squirted at him. But there was nothing Laddie liked better to do than to dig holes. Before little Lucia knew what he was about, he had plunged his white fore legs into the hole.

Scratch, kick, slap, bang, the mud flew all over him and all over little Lucia.

Little Lucia, who was squatting beside the hole, jumped to get away from the mud shower, but her pile of clams was in the way and down she went on her hands and knees in the mud. Her eyes were shut tight because little black streams were trickling down her face, and she didn't dare open her mouth for fear she would swallow mud. So there she hunched on her hands and knees, her head going this way and that for someone to help her. And all the time Laddie was making the mud fly higher than ever.

James laughed so hard that he could scarcely pull Laddie out of the hole. Mother picked little Lucia up and carried her over to a clean pool of water

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where she bathed her face. How little Lucia did sputter when she dared open her mouth! But Laddie didn't care. He liked digging clams, and he was off in a still muddier place, hard at work.

"Well, anyway," said little Lucia, picking up her trowel again. "He'll have to go in for a swim to get clean again, and he won't like that. The naughty dog!"

Before long the clam hod was piled high with big white clams.

"Is it a bushel yet?" asked little Lucia, sitting back on her heels.

"Well, anyway," said Daddy, "it is enough for an enormous chowder. Now I will wash them over there on the rocks."

They all went along too to sit on the rocks and rest a-while. The tide had gone out so far that the rocks at the edge of the cove were uncovered in a long point.

It lifted the brown rockweed lazily up and down in the pools.

“When the moon is full,” said Dad, “the tide goes out very low. Maybe we could find starfish.”

Out over the slippery seaweed-covered rocks they crawled. Out to the point which was never uncovered except, at the full of the moon. Here the water was bright and clean and the pools had floors of shining pebbles or white sand.

“I’ve found a red starfish,” cried little Lucia, “and, oh, a purple one, and a brown one.” She watched them curl up their rays in her hands. “They tickle my hands with their feelers,” she cried, shaking them off into the pool. “Oh, Daddy, what are these lumps of brown jelly?”

“Leave them alone a minute, little Lucia, and you will see,” said Dad.

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Little Lucia sat back and watched. Pretty soon the smooth brown lump stretched a little, then out around the top, slowly, softly, waving in the water, crept feathery tips. Soon the brown lump had become a lovely wide open blossom.

"Why, it came out just like a flower!" Little Lucia's eyes were wide with surprise.

"That's why they call it sea anemone," said Dad. "Though it is a little animal. Pretty, isn't it?"

"Oh, Daddy," sighed little Lucia, "I do like it. Show me some more!"

"Not now," said Dad, "because I am going to make you the best chowder you ever tasted in your life. And James has to row over for the evening milk, and I have to shuck the clams, and you and

Mother have to start the salt pork and onions. So you see!"

Little Lucia's mouth began to water. She turned back toward the camp.

"Are you sure, Daddy, that we ought not to go back and dig the bushel full? I begin to feel very hungry."

Daddy built the fire and shucked the clams. James rowed over after the milk and cream. Little Lucia peeled the potatoes. Mother cooked all the good things in a big pot over the camp-fire, and such a chowder as they all made together you never tasted. Rich and creamy and hot! Everybody had two bowls apiece, even Laddie, who had done nothing but run away with the salt pork just as they got ready to use it. But then, as little Lucia said, he had never been taught to cook.

CHAPTER VII

LADDIE TO THE RESCUE

LITTLE Lucia didn't like to go fishing. She liked going off in the boat, and throwing over the fish lines, and waiting for the first exciting nibble, but she didn't like it after the fish came on board. They flopped up at her so unexpectedly when she looked at them. The only time she had been fishing, Dad caught just two fish, and little Lucia thought they looked so unhappy that she made him throw them back into the sea.

So after that, little Lucia stayed at home when the family went fishing. She liked it. Laddie stayed with her because he was a worse fisher than she was. When



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She pulled off her shoes and socks and started across the strip of water. Laddie sat very still.

the fish began to flop, he began to bark and jump at them, until Daddy said no wonder he caught only two fish.

Laddie didn't mind, either, because he couldn't go. If little Lucia went on board the motor boat he felt he must go too, but he never did quite trust a boat that could bark louder than he did. He certainly didn't wish to go if little Lucia stayed ashore.

Today Dad wanted to try a new fishing place around the island, so he and James started out of the cove, chug! chug! put-tut-tut-tut! Mother took her book and lay down under a pine tree where presently she fell asleep.

"Now, Laddie," whispered little Lucia, "don't you wake my Mother. We'd better go down on the beach where she won't hear you."

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But when they got down on the shore, little Lucia could see the sandpiper with her four little pipers running around the beach. They were growing very fast and they could fly now, but little Lucia didn't want Laddie to scare them.

"If I tie him to the tent post he'll bark and wake Mother," she thought, holding him by his collar.

Laddie looked at her. He was ready to bark, or to chase the sandpipers, or to do anything else that popped into his mischievous head.

"I know," said little Lucia, "we'll go out on the rocks where we found the starfish. It is low tide, and I'd like to see that sea anemone blossom again."

She held Laddie's collar until he was safely past the piper family. Then away he went over the rocks out toward the

point. Every few minutes he would run back to see how little Lucia was getting along, but most of the time he was far ahead. She stopped to look at so many things that he got quite impatient. Besides, the rocks were pretty big for little Lucia to scramble over alone, and anyway he had twice as many legs.

At last they came to the far point where the pools lay quiet waiting for the tide to turn back. Little Lucia watched the barnacles putting out fairy fingers from the cracks of their tight little shells and drawing them in quickly when her shadow fell across them. The sea anemone was at home, but she would not blossom although little Lucia waited ever so long.

Then Laddie dug out a funny old crab who snapped his pincers at them and scuttled about sidewise. Laddie could hardly

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be persuaded to leave him, though little Lucia told him he would get his nose pinched if he didn't look out. And she had all she could do to keep him away from the spiny sea urchins.

"You'd better find something else to play with," she advised him. "If the crab doesn't pinch your nose, the sea urchin will prick it. You need to be looked after a good deal."

Even the lazy snails were out for a slow walk under the wet sea weed. There were so many things to look at that little Lucia never noticed how fast the tide was creeping in.

When she did lift her brown head and look about, she discovered that instead of being on a point of rock, she and Laddie were now on a small island. The tide

was covering the neck of land that she had crossed deeper every moment.

“Why, Laddie,” cried little Lucia, “we’ll have to wade. Come quickly before it gets too deep.”

She pulled off her shoes and socks and started across the strip of water. Laddie sat still. He had had so many baths that he hated going into the water.

“Back! back! back!” he barked. “Come back!”

“No, sir,” said little Lucia. “I’m going across before it gets any deeper and you’d better come too, or you’ll have to stay there all night,” and she waded sturdily along.

But little Lucia’s legs weren’t very long and she hadn’t gone far before the water was up to the edge of her bloomers.

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“Perhaps I’d better go back,” she thought. “I can call for Mother to come get me. But then Daddy’s got the boat.” She took another step forward.

Splash! down she went. The beach had suddenly hollowed out and the water here was over little Lucia’s head. She tried to cry out, but the cold salt water rushed into her mouth and stopped her; she tried to kick her legs and arms as James had taught her, but she was too frightened to remember how to swim; she tried to touch bottom and her little brown head went entirely out of sight under the water.

Suddenly, there was a terrific rush through the water. Lad was coming so fast that he churned up white waves around him. Down he went after little Lucia and up she came gurgling and



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Down he went after Little Lucia.

gasping and sputtering. His teeth were fast in the back of her middy, his neck was stretched up high over the water, and he was swimming, paddle, paddle, paddle, for the shore. In a minute they touched bottom, because after all the tide had not come in very far. But there had been enough water to carry off little Lucia, and she knew it.

Though she was crying hard with fright, she held tight around Laddie's neck as she lay sobbing in a wet little heap on the rocks.

Then all at once, chug! chug! put! tut! tut! tut! the motor boat was racing toward them. And running, stumbling, breathless, Mother was rushing toward them over the rocks! Everybody had seen little Lucia fall, but nobody had been near enough to do any good except Laddie.

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And as for Laddie! Well, if you had seen him strutting around while everyone praised him and hugged him, wet coat and all, you would have laughed. But even if he did put on airs, he never left little Lucia's side until they got her home. He walked close beside Dad, who carried her all dripping in his arms, and every now and then he reached up and touched her bare feet with his soft nose.

Brother James seemed to know just how Laddie felt because every now and then he too would reach out and touch little Lucia. And Mother held tight to her little wet hand and Daddy squeezed her so hard that she was glad when he put her down at the tent door.

In a few minutes a big camp-fire was blazing, and little Lucia was warm and in dry clothes, and the good smells were

coming from the camp stove, and little Lucia almost forgot how frightened she had been.

But Laddie didn't forget. He stayed close beside her even after she had gone to bed and was sound asleep. And always after that, it didn't matter how many people were near to look out for little Lucia, he never let her go out on the rocks without him right at her heels.

CHAPTER VIII

THE TRIP TO THE MAINLAND

THIS afternoon," said Daddy at breakfast a few days later, "we shall have to take a trip to the nearest mainland for supplies. We are getting out of almost everything."

Little Lucia hopped up from her camp-chair. Laddie hopped up from under the camp table. He always hopped when little Lucia did, though it did sometimes upset things.

"Am I going too?" cried little Lucia.

"Well," said Daddy, "I think perhaps you better come along. You might try to go in swimming again the way you did the other day."

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“I swam enough,” said little Lucia, “but I’m glad I am going. I need a new pail and six apples and a candle for my tent. Is Laddie going?”

Dad looked at Laddie and thought awhile.

“He was a good dog the other day,” said Brother James.

“All right,” said Daddy, “though he may not be a good dog today. Anyway he’d probably swim after us if little Lucia went without him.”

They had early lunch and little Lucia had an early nap and quite early in the afternoon they were ready to start. Each person took a basket on his arm to carry supplies. Even Laddie picked up a strawberry box in his mouth and tried to carry it on board.

When the engine of the motor boat

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started up, chug! chug! put! tut! tut! Laddie acted even worse than usual. Perhaps all the praises which he had had lately had spoiled him. Anyway, he barked and pranced up and down on the deck until James actually had to throw the bailing bucket of water on his head. Then he rumbled and grumbled and shook his wet fur over everybody until Dad nearly took him back to the shore. But they all remembered how good he had been and let him stay.

The wind blew enough to make little dancy waves slap against the sides of the boat. The engine settled into its steady song and little Lucia began to sing too. Not a real song, but up high and down low with the engine.

"I can feel the engine shake little notes out of my voice," she cried. "Listen,

Mother, don't you hear them shaking out over the water?" And she sang as loud and as high as she could.

"Oh, look!" shouted Brother James. "There are some porpoises!" He pointed out at a dozen fat porpoises rolling swiftly through the water, end over end.

"Oh! oh!" cried little Lucia. "Suppose they should roll under our boat!"

"They won't," said Mother in her nice soothing voice. "Porpoises never come up under boats."

But they came pretty near, near enough so that all at once Laddie caught sight of them. Now Laddie had quieted down because he didn't like the bailing bucket, but he was feeling rather smarty still. When he saw those great black porpoises rolling and rushing through the water, he sprang up with such a roar that he lost his

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balance, and splash! overboard he went again. This time they all put on waterproof slickers before they pulled him in. But the boat got wet and slippery and Daddy began to look cross.

"Tie that dog to a cleat, James," he said. "Next time he stays at home."

Then he reached down and started up the engine wheel again.

Chug! chug! put! tut—it stopped short. And not another tut would it say. James put his head over the edge of the boat.

"Oh, Dad!" he cried, looking quite scared, "the rope is caught in the propeller."

Dad sprang to the edge. Sure enough, while Laddie was being hauled aboard, the rowboat behind had floated too near and its rope had become entangled in the propeller which made the motor boat go.

“Back her up,” cried James.

Dad tried to back, and to go forwards, but no use; the engine was all tied up and it could not move.

Little Lucia sat very still, square in front of Laddie. She didn't want anybody to see him just then.

“Well,” said Daddy at last when he had tried everything. “There is nothing to do but row to that island over there. If I put the boat on the beach I can get the rope off.”

So James and Daddy got out into the rowboat and fastened a rope to the big boat, and then how they rowed! Pull! Pull! Pull! Pull! The wind that blew the dancy waves slap, slap against the boat made it all the harder to row.

Little Lucia peered over the edge with her big brown eyes.

"Oh, dear!" she thought, "they look so hot, and it is so far to that island!"

She made Laddie lie down in the bottom of the boat and keep very still. Once he peeked over the edge and James made an awful face at him. Little Lucia pulled him back quickly.

At last they reached the island. They pulled the motor boat on shore where Dad could reach the rope. Finally, he got it unwound.

"Now we'll have to hurry," he said, crawling out from under the boat, "or we won't get over to the mainland for our supplies. All ready, James, give her a push."

But though James and Daddy pushed, and Mother and little Lucia pushed, the boat would not budge. The tide had gone out too far for them to move the heavy boat.

They all sat down on the sand and looked sadly at each other. Even Laddie began to look sad.

“Nothing to do but wait for the tide to come back,” said Dad, “and that won’t be until midnight.”

Little Lucia’s big brown eyes looked scared. Even Brother James seemed startled.

“Oh, well,” said Mother in her nice soothing voice, “I guess we can all be Robinson Crusoes for a little while. If we can’t get away until midnight, we shall have to have some supper.”

“I know,” cried Brother James, “I will take the rowboat and catch us some fish.”

“I know,” cried little Lucia, “I will take a sharp stone and dig up some clams.”

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So James caught three large flounders, and little Lucia and Mother dug some clams, and they all gathered driftwood until they had a big camp-fire to cook over. Of course, they had no potatoes or bread or anything like that, but they were too hungry to mind.

They steamed the clams piping hot in the seaweed and they ate the fish piping hot from the clean flat stones it was cooked on. You never tasted anything so good!

Then since they had to stay until midnight, they built up an enormous driftwood fire and stretched out beside it on the boat cushions and rugs.

Little Lucia watched the flames flaring up into the dark sky and cuddled closer to Laddie's soft coat. The woods looked very black away from the fire, and she

was glad that they were all there, close together.

“I won’t go to sleep,” she thought, “because it will be midnight very soon, and I want to help get the boat off.”

But when midnight came, she was so sound asleep that she never knew when Daddy carried her on board the boat.

She opened her eyes when it chugged off into the black water, and she saw the stars blur and shake with the jar of the engine. Then she reached her hand out for Laddie, but he seemed very good and quiet now, so she fell asleep again.

When she woke again, the sun was shining into her tent and Dad and James had already had their breakfast and gone over to the mainland for supplies. But they had not taken Laddie with them this time.

CHAPTER IX

THE TRAIL TO INDIAN HEAD

I'D like to climb up to Indian Head this afternoon," said Brother James. "If we move camp tomorrow this will be my last chance."

"I'd like to go, too," said little Lucia. "It will be my last chance, too."

"I should say not." Brother James sounded very firm, but when he saw that little Lucia looked hurt, he hurried to explain. "It is a long, long walk, and there is no path, only a rough trail. You couldn't possibly walk so far."

"Well, I don't know about you," said Dad. "I've got to work on the motor boat to get it ready for our trip to Sheep Island

tomorrow. Do you think you could manage alone?"

Brother James drew himself up to his tallest thirteen-year-old height and spoke in his biggest thirteen-year-old voice.

"I certainly do," he said.

Daddy grinned at him. "All right," he said. "But you'd better start along or you won't get back in time for supper."

Mother looked a little worried, but she put some sandwiches in James's coat pocket and off he started.

At first Laddie thought he would go too, but when he saw that little Lucia was left behind he ran back to stay with her. It was very hard for him to decide what to do sometimes and he would run back and forth quite distracted. But after all, he was little Lucia's dog, and he felt he must look out for her.

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Brother James tramped off in the woods, whistling and slashing at the bushes with his big stick. He wanted very much to see Indian Head where that old Indian used to live all by himself.

The path grew rougher and began to climb up. The trees came so close together that James had to put his head down and bunt through them like a goat.

"I guess it's been a long time since anyone went over this trail," panted James as he stood still for a minute to rest.

A little red squirrel ran out on a branch and scolded him.

"You look like Mr. Nutty," said Brother James. "You better go down to the camp and say hullo to little Lucia."

Further along a rabbit hopped right across his path.

“Lucky for you,” said Brother James, “that Lad didn’t come with me.”

The trail passed close to a small pool full of big frogs who stuck their round eyes out of the water and made croaky remarks about James to each other. James tossed a pebble in the water and they stopped their talking and everyone dove for the bottom.

Suddenly the trail came out of the dark woods into the sunshine. And there James stood on Indian Head. Blue sea dancing away out to the blue rim, little islands like green lily pads, and a few white sails slipping along.

“No wonder the old Indian liked to live here,” said James, throwing himself down on the grass to rest.

He pulled out his package of sandwiches and ate them. Then he took a

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cool drink from the old Indian's spring. Then he was ready to start back.

"This was easy," said Brother James. "I could have found this place if the trail had been twice as hard."

On the way back he began to look around more and enjoy the sights. Here he stopped to pick raspberries, there to hunt checkerberry leaves. Suddenly he heard a crackle in the brush and turned sharply to see the white stubby tail and flying heels of a young deer.

"Well!" said Brother James, "that's the nearest I ever saw a deer. I bet his mother is right in there too. Guess I'll look around that clump of spruces."

The deer, of course, had not waited for James around the clump of spruces. He peered about and listened. Not a leaf moved, not a twig cracked.

“No use chasing them,” said James, and turned to his path.

But where had the trail gone? Surely it had been over here beyond the clump of spruces. James stood still and looked about him. Was it this clump of spruces or was it that clump of spruces? They looked very much alike. He ran to the other clump. No trail. He turned back. No trail. He pushed forward and found himself in dense underbrush. He tried to go around the underbrush and found steep rocks sliding down into a dark valley.

Brother James felt very queer. It makes you feel very queer when you are lost in the woods. Something seems to go thump! thump! inside of you. You want to run, but you don't know which way to go. You don't know *what* to do!

Brother James remembered how he had

told little Lucia that she could walk all day and still be on Moon Island. All day, and here was night coming! And he had eaten every one of his sandwiches. And they wanted to start for Sheep Island next morning. The more he thought, the more James wished that he had not been so sure about that trail.

"I might as well keep on going," decided James. "The sun is almost down already."

The deep woods grow dark very early and soon the shadows were thick about James. Mosquitoes buzzed around his head and stung his face. Briars scratched him. He stumbled over rocks and slipped in marshy spots. The thumping feeling in his stomach grew worse and worse.

At last he stopped.

"This won't do," said Brother James. "I'm getting as scared as little Lucia, and I shall never find my way out by running around like this. I suppose I might as well make up my mind to stay in these woods all night."

He thought of how worried Mother would be and felt another thump inside of him. But then he shook himself and began to look around for a place where he could make a spruce bed. He wished that he had brought his sweater; the woods felt damp and cold.

James had just got his jack-knife out and was beginning to cut off fir balsam boughs for a bed, when away off in the distance he heard a faint, "Row! row! row!"

Down went his branches, up went his head. "Yoooo-hooo!" he yelled at the

top of his voice. "Yooo-hooo! Here, Laddie, Laddie, Laddie!"

Nearer and nearer came the "Row! row! row!" Louder and louder shouted James. Then there was a great crashing through the brush, and then through the shadows hurtled Lad. He was going so fast that he flung himself up against James and nearly tipped him over. But James didn't care. He didn't mind when Laddie jumped all over him and licked his face and splashed mud on him; in fact, he liked it so much that if he hadn't been thirteen years old—well, anyway, he was thirteen years old.

So he got up and started off after Lad toward the hallooing that he could hear now in the distance. Before long Laddie had led him back to Dad, and all Dad

said was, "Supper was getting cold so I thought I'd hurry you up a bit."

James said, "Sorry, Dad. I missed my way," and that was all they said about it.

But when they got back to camp and Brother James saw Mother's face and felt little Lucia squeeze him as far around his waist as she could reach, he knew how worried they had been. If supper hadn't been all ready, he would have felt very queer inside again. But after he had eaten one dozen pancakes, he felt better.

Little Lucia had pulled her small camp-chair beside his middle-sized camp-chair. She rubbed her hand up and down his sweater sleeve.

"We showed Laddie your sweater," she whispered, "and told him to go find you. Wasn't he a smart dog?"

James reached over and patted Laddie on his soft head.

“I must say,” said Brother James, “that if Lad isn’t much of a sailor, he is a pretty good dog to take camping.”

CHAPTER X

SHEEP ISLAND CAMP

NEXT morning everybody was up early to get ready to move camp to Sheep Island.

“I like it here very much,” said little Lucia, looking around at the cove with its high rocky sides. Then as the little trail of sandpipers whizzed past, “Maybe there won’t be any pipers on Sheep Island.”

“Sandpipers everywhere,” said Daddy cheerfully. “And I have heard that Sheep Island is covered with delicious meadow mushrooms. You will like them!”

So everybody began to fold up things, chairs and beds and tents and dishes.

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All the waste papers were burned up and the fire covered with sand.

“Now the beach looks as neat as a pin,” said Mother. “Just as clean as when we first arrived.”

Chug! chug! Put—tut—tut—tut! out they went with the rocky cliffs echoing tut—tut—tut after them. Laddie was well tied to the cleat where all he could do was to bark. The day was soft and gray and cloudy and the water was smooth gray with white edges where they cut through it.

“We may get rain tomorrow,” said Dad, looking at the sky. “But by that time we shall have our camp all settled on Sheep Island.”

By noontime they reached the island, which was so small that it made scarcely a pin-head on the map. It was grass cov-

ered with hardly a tree on it. Here and there little Lucia could see sheep grazing. There was no deep cove for landing, but at last Daddy found a sandy beach and he threw the anchor out.

“We will have lunch first,” he said, “before we try to unpack.”

Laddie felt that he had been sailing in the boat about long enough. He hadn’t had a chance for a good run the whole morning and he was ready for some fun. As soon as he got ashore he began to bark and race up and down the beach.

The noise startled a sheep which was grazing near the bank and away she galloped. That was enough for Laddie. He had never seen a sheep before, but here was something which he could chase. Away he galloped, too. Little Lucia whistled, James called, Dad shouted.

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No use, Lad was making so much noise himself that he couldn't hear anything. Anyway, he was too busy to pay attention.

When one sheep does anything, all the other sheep do exactly the same thing. So pretty soon the island was covered with galloping sheep. The more sheep that Laddie could make gallop, the crazier he became. He raced back and forth, jumping at their heels, nipping their tails, and roaring. Row! row! row! He *was* having a good time.

But the sheep weren't. Dad and Mother and James and little Lucia tried everything to catch their tormentor. They ran, they whistled, they shouted, they threw sticks, but all they managed to do was to scare the sheep worse. And who could run as fast as Lad?

At last he got his eye on one fat sheep that had started toward the shore. He left the others and raced after her. She ran straight ahead until she got to the bank. She looked behind her. Lad was coming! She looked ahead of her. Water! She gave a great leap and landed, all four legs close together, on a rock out in the water.

Lad stopped short. There wasn't room for a pebble besides the sheep on that rock. Anyway, he didn't really like the idea of getting too close to one of these strange animals.

Row! row! row! he yelled at the sheep and then he stopped. James had him fast by the collar.

But the poor fat sheep who had jumped so far when she saw Lad coming, was

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afraid to jump back again. She balanced on top of the rock, and looked down at the tide coming in around her.

"Ah—ah—ah!" she cried, full of woe.

Not until little Lucia had led Laddie away, and Dad and James had waded out to the rock, could the fat sheep be persuaded to go ashore. And then she went so fast that she must have reached the other side of the island in about three minutes.

"Yah! yah! yah!" she cried as she ran.

"She sounds very mad," said little Lucia, "and I don't blame her. Make an old lady like her jump on such a rock! You should be ashamed, Laddie!"

But Laddie was sorry for only one thing, that they wouldn't let him help the fat sheep to run still faster across the island.

They dragged him back to camp where everybody, including Laddie, sat and panted awhile.

"Now what shall we do?" asked Mother when she could get her breath. "Just look at him already."

Lad, pulling at his leash, ears up, was peering over the edge of the bank at the poor silly sheep, all ready to start them off on another gallop.

"Collies are sheep dogs," suggested James. "He just needs training."

"Well," said Daddy, "as I said before, my vacation isn't to be spent training dogs. There would be no peace for anybody on this island. Off we go."

Just then a big drop of rain hit little Lucia square on the nose.

"Daddy!" she cried, "it's raining!"

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“And look!” James pointed out to sea.
“Here comes the fog!”

Sure enough, a big bank of white fog was rolling in toward them.

Mother shook her head.

“Here we must stay,” she said, “until it clears.”

They looked at Laddie, who was watching the sheep disappear in the white fog. They all shook their heads.

Then they hurried around to get unpacked before it rained any harder. When the tents were up, the fog was so thick that they could not even see the motor boat just off the shore. By the time the flaps were fastened, it was raining hard.

Dad had an extra tent fly to shelter the camp stove, which he placed close to the tent door. For rainy weather he had

brought along an alcohol heater. Soon bacon and eggs were sizzling over the fire and they were all cozy and dry under the tent while the rain dripped on the roof overhead. When little Lucia peered out of the crack in the tent flap, all she could see was thick white fog.

“I must say,” said Dad, sniffing, “that I wouldn’t choose a wet day to keep Lad tied in the tent, but here he must stay.”

And there he had to stay all that day and the next, though James and little Lucia took him for walks up and down the beach. But what fun was there in marching up and down a beach tied to a leash? Especially when he could hear the sheep moving around up there in the fog. If you think Laddie liked Sheep Island, you don’t know at all how he felt.

Nobody else liked it much, either. Dad

found three mushrooms, and that was all. He said the sheep had eaten them up. James didn't care about taking long walks because you couldn't see anything, and because even if the island was small, fog was easier to get lost in than woods. Little Lucia liked to hear the drip, drip, drip of the rain at night on the roof so close to her head, but she got tired of it in the daytime. And both day and night the mosquitoes bit everybody.

At the end of the second day, a fresh breeze came out of the north.

"Hurrah!" cried Dad. "It's clearing off!"

The fog peeled back, the sky and the water began to turn blue again, and by sundown the little new moon shone clear as silver in the west.

Everybody, including Laddie, could hardly wait to get started in the morning.

"Where shall we go?" asked James, getting out the maps and charts.

Nobody said a word.

"Where shall we go?" repeated James, looking up from his maps and charts.

They all looked at little Lucia.

"I know," she said.

"Where?" asked Mother.

"Back to our cove on Moon Island," pleaded little Lucia.

"There is a good harbor for the boat there," said Dad. "If the wind had blown here, our boat might have come ashore."

"Moon Island has good spring water," said Mother. "This tastes queer."

"It has plenty of 'driftwood,'" said

James, "and here we couldn't have any fire at all if it weren't for our alcohol stove."

"There aren't any mosquitoes on Moon Island cove," said little Lucia, "and I haven't seen a single sandpiper here."

So they folded up all their chairs and beds and tents and dishes and sailed back to Moon Island.

Chug! chug! Put-tut-tut! said the motor boat to the high cliffs of the cove. And tut-tut-tut echoed the high cliffs back. Row! row! row! shouted Laddie and he leaped overboard before the boat landed, he was so glad to get back.

Peek! peek! peek! called the sandpipers from the beach. Even the green shade of the trees seemed friendly after barren Sheep Island.

When they were all settled once more,

little Lucia pulled her small camp-chair to the door of her tent and looked out at the blue cove shining in the sun.

“Let’s stay here till we have to go back,” she said.

And they did.

CHAPTER XI

OUT ON A MOONLIGHT NIGHT

LITTLE Lucia woke suddenly from a sound sleep. She sat up in her cot and looked about her. All was still and dark in the tent.

“I thought I heard a queer noise,” she said to herself, “but I must have been dreaming.”

Through the tent flap she could see the cove shining like silver in the moonlight. Not a breath of wind stirred it. Down went her brown head on the pillow again and her brown eyes began to take long winks.

Gr-rumph! gr-rumph! roo-ah! roo-ah!

roo-ah! the roaring filled the tent. This time James sat up in bed too and Lad jumped out from under little Lucia's cot.

"Oh, what is it, Brother James?" cried little Lucia, her eyes as big as saucers. "It sounds like lions and tigers out in the water."

"I don't know," said Brother James, "but I'll find out."

"No! no!" cried little Lucia, "they might eat you."

"Nonsense," said Brother James, for the noise had stopped.

Just then Daddy's voice came sleepily out of his tent.

"Nothing but the seals, children," he called. "Guess they are having a moonlight picnic in the cove."

Little Lucia hopped out of bed and ran to the tent door.

“Oh! oh! oh! Seals, James, seals! Did you ever see one in your life, Brother James?”

“No, I never did,” said Brother James, “but I am going to now,” and he put on his sneakers and rolled up his pajama legs.

“Me too!” said little Lucia. “I am going to see one now,” and she began to hunt for her sneakers while she rolled up her pajama legs.

“Now, little Lucia,” said Brother James, “I may have to go way out on the rocks to see them, and it is too dark for you to go, and you are too little.”

Little Lucia had found her sneakers and she put them on.

“I am five and a half years old now,” she said, “and it’s bright moonlight, and anyway—” her voice sounded quavery

all at once over in her dark corner, "anyway I want to see the seals."

Brother James hesitated at the tent door.

"If you go, Lad will have to go, and he will scare away the seals before anybody can see them."

Click, he heard Laddie's leash snap into his collar.

"He never acts bad when I have him on the leash," pleaded little Lucia's voice. "Laddie never saw a seal, either."

"All right." Brother James stalked out of the tent.

Little Lucia with Laddie close beside her paddled along behind. Nobody said a word. The seals were perfectly quiet.

"Guess they're gone," growled James. "Might as well go back," and he started to stalk back to the tent.

Then he heard little Lucia's voice very soft.

"Wait a minute, Brother James. I see them! I see them!"

He turned and looked out on the rocks where little Lucia was pointing. There in the moonlight on the rocks they could see some big black things balanced like boats with their tails curled up in the air.

"Good enough!" Brother James forgot to be cross. "We can get out there easily and have a close look at them."

Quietly they crept along over the rocks in their sneakers and quietly Laddie crept beside them with his soft pads. Nearer and nearer they came to the rocks where the seals balanced. At last they could see the wet gleaming sides and funny dog faces.



Mary Sherwood Wright

Nearer and nearer they came to the rocks where the seals
balanced.

"I hope they won't roar again," thought little Lucia. "It would scare me most to death with them so near."

But not a sound did they make. Suddenly, plump, the biggest, blackest seal slipped from his rock into the shining water and was gone. Plump, another slipped after him, and then another, and another. Nothing was left but water all broken up into silver ripples.

"Sit down," whispered James. "They saw us."

The children crawled behind a rock. Lad lay down at their feet. Soon wet gleaming heads began to bob out of the water again.

"I wish I could swim under water as long as that," breathed James.

Suddenly little Lucia nudged James so hard that he nearly tipped over.

"Oh, look!" she whispered, "right there! A mother seal and her babies."

James peered around the rock. There, so near that they could see their round eyes shine, were a big seal lying on a rock with her tail curled up in the air, and two small seals lying beside her with their little tails curled up in the air. The smallest one looked quite white in the moonlight.

Little Lucia was enchanted with them.

"I'm going nearer," she said. "Maybe the white baby would let me touch it."

Before James could stop her, she was out from behind their shelter. Plump, the mother seal was in the water. Plump, plump, the two baby seals were after her. Plump, plump, plump, all around them, and in two minutes the rocks were empty.

Only silver ripples to tell where the seals had gone.

Little Lucia stood still in a pool almost up to the edge of her pajama legs and stared out at the shining water. Her big brown eyes looked almost ready to cry.

"I scared them away," she said.

"Never mind," said Brother James, taking her hand and starting back toward the camp. "You found them in the first place and you saw the mother seal and her babies. I shouldn't have seen them at all."

Little Lucia felt comforted and waded out of her puddle.

"Perhaps they will come back, Brother James."

Gr-rumph! gr-rumph! roo-ah! roo-ah!
Already they were far down the shore.
Little Lucia shivered.

"I'm glad they didn't holler in my ears," she said. "Now could I let Laddie off his leash?"

"Sure," said Brother James. "He was a good dog."

Laddie thought so too, and away he dashed for a little exercise before he went back to the tent. They could hear him running along the wood path at the edge of the bank.

Suddenly out of the trees on the edge of the bank clumped a fat, waddly creature.

"Well, little Lucia, upon my word! If here isn't a porcupine," cried Brother James. "I haven't seen one since I made my Porcupine Preventer at home."

Now Laddie had never seen a porcupine at all. And when the fat, waddly creature clumped out on the bank, he fol-

lowed. Perhaps he could make it gallop the way he did the sheep.

"Lad!" called James sharply, "come here! Quick!"

But too late! The porcupine had waddled as far as it wanted to, and it stopped short. Up raced Lad and took a sniff at the prickly tail.

"Ee! ee! ee!" The cliffs rang and echoed with poor Laddie's squeals and whimpers. He ran to James, trying to rub his nose on the ground.

James seized his head.

"You'll only dig the spines into your nose if you do that," he said. "Why didn't you mind?"

But though he sounded very cross, he hurried Laddie back to the tent as fast as he could.

Little Lucia ran behind. She remem-

bered well those cruel spines with their fish-hook barbs. And now her Laddie had some stuck in his nose, and maybe they would never come out. Oh, dear! oh, dear!

At the tent they found Mother in her bathrobe. She had heard Lad's squeals and knew something was wrong. In a minute James had told her what had happened. In another minute Mother had the candle lighted and Daddy's pliers from his tool case.

"Now stand still, Lad," she said in her nice, soothing voice.

Poor Laddie knew that she was going to help him and he tried to stand still, but ee! ee! ee! how it hurt him when the pliers seized a barb. Little Lucia put her arm around him on one side and Brother James around the other, and ee! ee! ee! out came

the spines one at a time. Oh! oh! oh! and ee! ee! ee! At last they were all out.

Then Mother put some Arabian Balsam on the poor sore nose, though Laddie licked it off once, and everybody went back to bed.

Little Lucia stayed awake until she was sure that Laddie had gone to sleep. But after all, the spines had not been in long enough to do much harm, and in a few minutes she could hear him under her cot, breathing deeply, sound asleep.

"He's all right now, Brother James, whispered little Lucia.

"That's good," said Brother James, and little Lucia could hear him turning over in his dark corner.

"He didn't mean to be naughty," whispered little Lucia.

“I suppose not,” said Brother James, with a big yawn. “But I must say he gets along better with seals than he does with porcupines.”

CHAPTER XII

THE TRIP HOME

DADDY'S vacation was almost over when one morning James rowed back with the milk and reported that the farmer said a nor'easter was brewing.

"What's that?" asked little Lucia anxiously.

"It is a storm where the wind blows from the northeast," said Mother, and she looked anxious too.

"And it pours rain and the waves come roaring in," added James. "I'd like to see those waves."

"Well, I shouldn't," said Daddy. "Not here. And since we have to go in a few

days anyway, I think we'll start right now before the storm gets here."

Little Lucia looked at the cove. It was no longer a bright patch of blue. It was slaty gray and already small waves were rolling in from outside. She began to fold up her rug.

"Do you think we might come back again next summer, Daddy?" she asked.

"I do," said Daddy, pulling up a tent stake.

Then everybody began to fold up things, chairs and beds and tents and dishes. Papers burned up, sand on the fire, everything as neat as a pin. All this packing up took some time and when they made the last trip out to the motor boat, the waves rocked them about a good deal. Daddy looked outside the cove at the whitecaps.

"Guess we'll put the spray hood on before we start," he said.

So he and James unrolled the little canvas tent to keep the spray from dashing into the boat. They fastened it down along the deck. Then they all put on their oilskin slickers and oil hats.

"I wish Laddie had his rubber coat here that he got last Christmas," said little Lucia. "He'll get very wet."

"Tie him up so that he won't tip overboard," advised Dad, "or he will get a good deal wetter."

Mother took the tiller ready to steer, James pulled up the anchor, Daddy rolled up the engine wheel, and chug! chug! put-tut-tut! They were off. Tut-tut-tut! echoed the rocky cliffs, and row! row! row! shouted Laddie. The sandpipers,

gray as the water, flew past in a line, calling peek! peek! peek!

Out of the cove away from the shelter of the cliffs, the wind blew stronger. The waves began to splash against the sides of the motor boat.

"I don't know about this," said Mother, looking anxious. "Do you think we had better go on?"

"Oh, I think so," said Dad. "It isn't a long run and this is a very good boat."

"Oh, yes, Mother," cried James. "A little spray won't hurt us, and anyway we never could unpack everything again."

"I like the waves," said little Lucia, her brown eyes very bright under her yellow oilskin hat. "It's like going up and down in my swing."

But Laddie didn't like them. He didn't like the looks of them rolling up

white-edged toward him and he didn't like the feeling of them. It was too much like the elevator. He began to look dejected. Then he sat down as if he were very tired. Then he lay down on the floor. But nothing helped. He looked sadder and sadder. The engine might have chugged its top off and he wouldn't have barked once.

"What makes Laddie so quiet?" asked little Lucia, patting his head to comfort him.

"Seasick!" chuckled Brother James. "I told you he wasn't much of a sailor."

"Oh, poor Laddie!" cried little Lucia, and Laddie rolled unhappy eyes at her. "Now, James, don't you laugh at him. He doesn't like to be laughed at even when he feels well."

James chuckled still more.

"He doesn't care whether you laugh or cry now," he said. "He's a great sailor."

But pretty soon James began to look dejected. He looked sadder and sadder. Though his tan was very brown indeed, he still looked pale under it. Mother gave Dad the tiller a minute, and folded a rug on the long seat. Brother James stretched out on it.

"Guess I'll take a little nap," he said. "I didn't get much sleep last night."

On they went, up and down with long swoops, sideways with short slaps. Sometimes the motor boat tried to go both ways at once, little Lucia thought. She loved it. It made her want to sing loud and high. But she was afraid she might wake up Laddie and James who lay still with eyes closed tight.

"Fifteen minutes more and we shall be

safe in our own harbor," shouted Daddy cheerfully.

James opened his eyes and shut them again.

"I'm still sleepy," he said. Laddie wagged his tail once.

Splish! splash! the waves dashed around and over the spray hood. The water stung little Lucia's cheeks and ran down over her slicker. Under her dripping hat she looked as gay as a dandelion.

"I like it, don't you, Mother?" called out little Lucia to Mother, who sat there steering, all dripping and rosy too.

"Pretty well," laughed Mother. "But I'll be glad to see the snug harbor in fifteen minutes."

Just then the engine coughed and stopped short. Laddie opened one eye. Mother stopped laughing and looked

anxious. Daddy disappeared down behind the engine.

Cough! cough! little Lucia could hear the wheel roll up, but no smooth chug, chug followed.

Little Lucia peered out around the spray hood.

"Oh! oh! Daddy!" she cried, "the wind is blowing us on to the buoy!"

Out popped Daddy's head from the engine. Sure enough, the wind and waves were rushing them straight on to the big steamer buoy. Mother pushed the tiller over as far as she could, but the boat wouldn't steer when the engine stopped.

Brother James heard little Lucia's scream. He sat up on his bench. When he saw the great heavy buoy bearing down on them, he sprang for the boat hook. Before Dad could leave his en-

gine, James, flat on his stomach on the deck, had shoved the boat away from the buoy just as it was about to pitch into it.

Mother seized him by the heels and pulled him back. Just then, chug! chug! tut-tut-tut! went the engine, and they were safely off. Brother James slammed down the boat hook and seized the tiller which Mother had left. He looked as brown as ever and not a bit sleepy.

“My goodness!” he shouted. “That was a narrow squeak!”

Mother took the tiller. “Don’t you want to lie down again?” she asked.

“I should say not,” said Brother James. “I feel fine.”

He looked at Laddie who hadn’t opened one eye in all the excitement, but he didn’t even smile. “Poor Lad!” he said.

In sixteen minutes they could see their

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own mooring. In two more they were tied up to it.

Back and forth went the rowboat with chairs and tents and cots and dishes. The cans of food in the cupboards were all gone.

On the very first trip ashore, went Laddie. He stood on the beach and stretched first his front legs, then his hind legs.

"Ow! ow!" he said. "What a trip!"

But by the time they were unloaded and ready to start up to the house, he felt better. He pranced along beside them, nipping at baskets and suitcases and barking, "rah! rah! rah!"

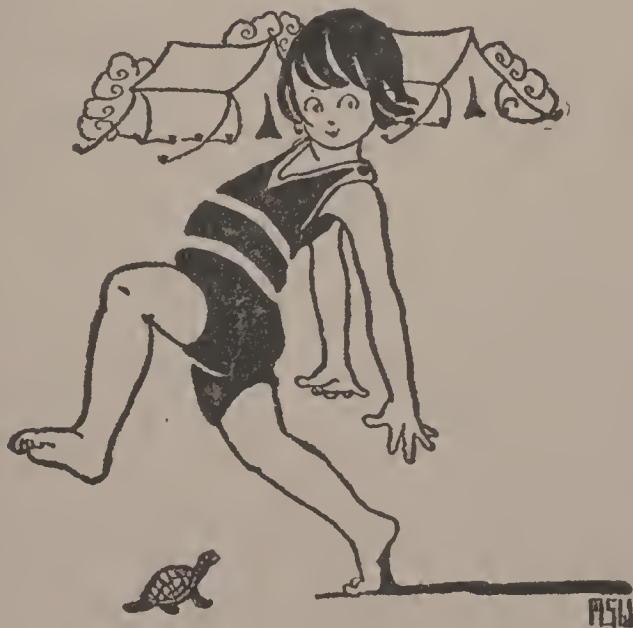
At the door of the house stood fat cook, her arms all flour from the raisin cookies she had just put in the oven. Over in the trees by the hammocks, Nutty whisked

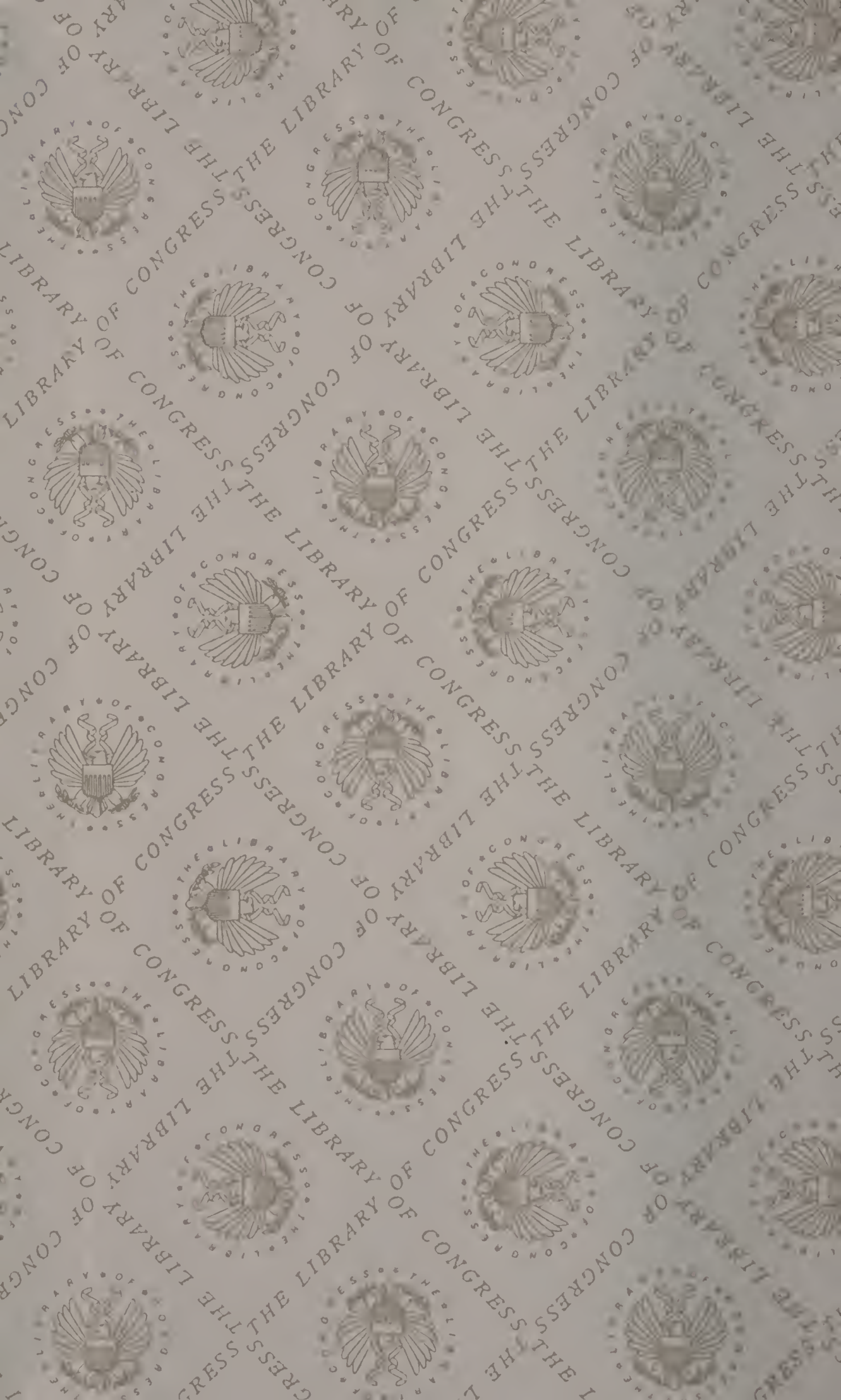
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his long tail and chattered his alarm clock. And little Lucia thought she saw a brown thrush fly across from the wood.

They ran in the house and shut the door on the blustering wind. A big fire roared up in the fireplace, the cookies smelled brown and buttery from the kitchen. Little Lucia untied her oilskin hat and dropped off her wet slicker.

“We had the nicest camp in the world,” she said, “but I am glad to be home again.”





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